

MEETING: 24/05/2016

Ref: 13039

**ASSESSMENT CATEGORY - Improving Londoners' Mental Health**

**Together for Mental Wellbeing**

**Amount requested: £115,188**

**Amount recommended: £111,270**

**Adv: Jemma Grieve Combes**

**Base: Islington**

**Benefit: Several NE London boroughs**

**The Charity**

Together for Mental Wellbeing (Together) is a national charity that supports people experiencing mental distress to live independent and fulfilling lives. The charity provides supported accommodation and accommodation services for people recovering from severe mental distress in the transition towards independent living; personalised community support; advocacy; and criminal justice mental health services – to which the application before you relates.

**The Application**

Liaison and diversion services exist to provide treatment and support to people in mental distress when they first come into contact with the criminal justice system. Together already delivers successful liaison and diversion services in north and west London and is now applying for City Bridge Trust funding to allow it to pilot and demonstrate the added value of peer-support within these services. If successful, Together hopes that the NHS will fund a similar model as part of the planned national rollout of liaison and diversion services.

**The Recommendation**

Together is acknowledged as a leader in its field and recently won the Howard League Liaison and Diversion award (2015). It has a good relationship with NHS trusts and sits on relevant strategic decision making bodies. If successful, it is in a good position to influence the service design of the national rollout of liaison and diversion services using the evidence from this project. Whilst the application represents a relatively high cost per individual (up to 40 beneficiaries/ year), it has the potential to have a far wider impact.

***£111,270 over 2 years (£56,000; £55,270) for the salary of a f/t Peer Support Coordinator and related costs of a peer support programme in liaison and diversion services in North and West London conditional on a revised monitoring framework.***

**Funding History**

Meeting Date	Decision
06/04/2006	£110,000 over three years (£36,000; £37,000; £37,000) for the salary of a Service User Development Manager for people with a mental disability and their carers, plus a contribution to volunteers' expenses.

**Background and detail of proposal**

Many people who come into contact with the criminal justice system experience some form of mental distress. Over the last 10 years, efforts have been made to identify mental distress when individuals first come into contact with courts and the police and to assess and provide treatment/support: liaison and diversion. Together has been successfully contracted to run several liaison and diversion services in north and east London in partnership with NHS Trusts. The services comprise of clinically qualified Mental Health Practitioners who assess and report on individuals'

mental health and Community Link Workers who support offenders for up to three months after custody to link into community support.

Whilst the support of professionals is valuable, service users have identified the need for more informal, longer-term support, by someone who has been in the same position as them. Together has successfully used a peer support model in other areas of its criminal justice work and want to pilot a similar model in its existing north and east London liaison and diversion services. A Peer Support Coordinator would be employed who would recruit, train and support 10 volunteer peer-supporters who would use their own experiences to provide post-release support to individuals leaving custody settings (up to 3/year each). They would meet service users at an appropriate frequency through one-to-one sessions, drop in sessions or attending meetings with them. Support could involve signposting to services, sharing their own lived experience, encouraging social support networks and other emotional and practical support. Your officer met with two of Together's lived-experience experts who spoke passionately about the value of peer support both for those benefitting and for those delivering.

### Financial Information

Forecast income for the current year to 31st March 2017 is £17,989,000, of which £17,179,552 (96%) was confirmed by 18<sup>th</sup> April 2016. The cost of generating funds is low as the majority of the charity's income is generated through contracts and provision of housing/supported housing services.

Year-end at	2014/15 Audited	2015/16 DRAFT forecast	2016/17 budget
	£	£	£
<b>Income and Expenditure</b>			
Income	18,408,252	17,845,296	17,989,000
Expenditure	18,545,401	17,793,356	17,989,000
Unrestricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	40,662	287,913	0
Restricted Funds Surplus / (Deficit)	(177,811)	(235,973)	0
Total Surplus / (Deficit)	(137,149)	51,940	0
Surplus / (Deficit) as a % of turnover	(0.75%)	0.29%	0%
Cost of Generating funds (% of income)	99,452 (0.54%)	TBC	TBC
<b>Free unrestricted reserves</b>			
Unrestricted free reserves held at Year End	3,539,875	3,827,788	3,827,788
~ how many months' worth of unrestricted expenditure	2.6	2.7	2.6
Reserves Policy target	4,160,974 to 8,321,948	4,274,029 to 8,548,059	4,403,344 to 8,806,688
~ how many months' worth of unrestricted expenditure	3-6 months unrestricted expenditure	3-6 months unrestricted expenditure	3-6 months unrestricted expenditure
Free reserves over / (under) minimum target	(621,099) <sup>1</sup>	(446,241)	(575,556)

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the charity wish it to be known that their trustees have approved a policy of having general unrestricted reserves rather than free unrestricted reserves of between 3-6 months unrestricted expenditure. If the general unrestricted reserves are considered they are not below their minimum reserves target.